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TRUE CHARITY A CHECK TO PAUPERISM.

A

DISCOURSE

DELIVERED BEFORE

THE HOWARD BENEVOLENT SOCIETY

AT THE

OLD SOUTH CHURCH,

JANUARY 24, 1841.

BY REV. WILLIAM HAGUE,
Pastor of the Church in Federal street.

SECOND EDITION.

BOSTON:
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ADVERTISEMENT.

The following Discourse is published in accordance with a vote of the Executive Committee of the HOWARD BENEVOLENT SOCIETY, — believing the principles set forth to be those of "*True Charity*," exhibiting, in a clear and lucid manner, the proper method of relieving the sufferings of poverty, without nourishing vice or awarding a premium to sloth, and thus increasing the virulence of the evil we profess to remedy. With the hope that its circulation may aid the Society in its good designs, it is commended to the Christian public, and especially to Him who hath said, "BLESSED IS HE WHO CONSIDERETH THE POOR."

BOSTON, MARCH, 1841.

S. N. Dickinson, Printer,
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DISCOURSE.

PSALMS XLI. I.

BLESSED IS HE WHO CONSIDERETH THE POOR.

THE text describes a character. It would let us know, who it is that may be called a happy man, and asserts that it is the charitable man —*he who considereth the poor.* The selfish man of the world, taking counsel of his own heart, may ask, "How can that be? Is there any thing attractive in the sight of squalid want, of tattered garments, of bitter tears, and helpless misery? I can conceive of enjoyment in con-

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sidering the wonders and glories of creation; the sky, and earth, and sea, in their mild beauty or their stormy grandeur; in beholding the bloom of Nature, or the charms of art; in surrounding one's self with the innocent delights which wealth may command; the comforts of home and the pleasures of select society; in breathing the fresh and fragrant air of one's own parlor, where the sweet influences of music, and song, and literature, and friendship, all combine to dispel care, to soften the asperities of life, to smooth the brow, and light up the features with the expression of a chastened hilarity. These are things worth living for, and the anticipa-

tion of them nerves me to dare and to endure. And having gained all these, can it be *happiness* to leave all, even for an hour, to breathe the damp, pent-up air of the garrets and cellars of the poor; to hear their complaints, to share their sorrows, and to diminish one's amount of property for their sake? No. You may call it a duty, a task—a tax to be paid—a burden to be borne; but it is contrary to reason and experience to call it a *means of happiness.*" So speaks the mere worldling, both in theory and practice. The "luxury of doing good" he knows not. Of the charity that is "twice blessed—blessing him that gives and him that takes"—he has

no conception. The very phrase seems to be drawn from the romance, not the reality of life. His oracle does not teach it, his maxims do not recognize it. No: the doctrine that it is *happiness* to consider the poor, that it is "more blessed to give than to receive," is not the language of the world's philosophy, nor a sentiment inspired by the genius of ambition, nor promulgated from the throne of fashion; but the teaching of that Christianity, whose spirit is the spirit of pure benevolence, and which seeks to touch and move our hearts by the example of Him who, though he was rich, for our sakes became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be made rich.

The world's philosophy has no *heart*. The Epicurean said to his disciple, "Take care of your health, avoid excess in order to avoid satiety—be temperate in order to enjoy—surround yourself with all that is agreeable, shun all unpleasant sights and sounds—and thus will you attain the chief end of man." As the oracle spoke, sensuality took the hint, placed herself among the virtues, and in the name of reason extinguished sympathy for the poor. The Stoic said, "Take things as they come—fate governs all—what is, cannot be altered, and the wise man cares for nothing. Do you complain of pain? Believe me, it is no evil. Do you groan under misfor-

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then twelve per cent., the Emperor lent money at five per cent., and obliged all his debtors to pay the interest into an office established for the purpose. The interest being low, the number of borrowers was large, and the treasury overflowing. But this was an appeal to covetousness, not to benevolence, and in keeping with the spirit of a low and selfish system of religion. It remained for Christianity to proclaim to the world the true *law of love;* to take this element of goodness, which Judaism had confined to a narrow pale, and to make it universal; and in saying to each and all, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, to show that the angels who had her-

alded its birth, were true to its spirit of philanthrophy, when they sang, Peace on earth and good-will to man.

But in Christianity there is no *ultraism.* That is, there is in it no tendency to fix the attention on one thing, to the neglect of the relations which it bears to other things. It has no such impress of human imperfection. Its mercy has a definite relation to justice; its benefactions are suited to condition and character. In seeking to relieve poverty, it does not overlook the cause and cure of poverty. It does not forget that industry is a virtue, that idleness is a shame and sin; that to give alms to a beggar who is able to help himself, is to award a premium to sloth,

to nourish vice, and so to increase the evil which we profess to remedy. Thus it enforces the arrangement of the Author of Nature, who has made exertion essential to comfort. It declares that "drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags;" that while the garden of the sluggard is bearing briars, and he folds his hands, "his poverty shall come as one that travaileth, and his want as an armed man;" *that he who dealeth with a slack hand shall be poor*, and with the voice of entreaty, beseeches all to *study to be quiet, to do their own business, to work with their own hands, that they may walk honestly, and have lack of nothing;* and then, with the voice of authority, utters its

command, saying, "*If any man* WILL NOT work, neither shall he eat." While, therefore, it teaches us to seek out and relieve helpless distress, it forbids us to reverse the law of Nature, which makes want the consequent of sloth, and the pains of hunger the punishment of a wilful and shameless beggary.

Thus we see that the benevolence of Christianity commands the respect of the judgment, as well as the suffrage of the heart; addresses not only the feeling of compassion, but also the sense of justice and of fitness. A system of charity, in order to gain an effective hold upon the mind of an intelligent community, must have regard to both of these

elements. Now, it is quite remarkable, that wherever the teachings of the Bible have not furnished a standard of action, where they have been unknown or unstudied, there has been a neglect of one or the other of these features in the mode of treating the poor. The poor have either been despised, or else helped in such a way as to injure them. Poverty has been treated with cruelty, as if it were a deserved disgrace and punishment, or else so relieved as to aggravate it. Alms have either been withheld entirely, or so dispensed as to extinguish in the poor all sense of honor or of shame, and to smooth their path, in descending to still lower depths.

The sigh of distress has been constantly opening afresh the fountains of feeling in the bosoms of the compassionate, and the abuses of compassion have been steeling the hearts of another class of men against all appeals to pity.

How to give immediate relief to the sufferings of poverty, so as not to increase its ultimate virulence, is a grave and interesting problem. Especially must it be so regarded by a youthful nation like this, who can exclude from our soil the very germs of those evils, which the older nations of the world are laboring as with convulsive death-throes to extirpate. What deep groans is England heaving at this hour, under the

weight of her pauperism! It has been said by Lord Brougham, in his place in the House of Lords, that "the sad system of the poor laws had entailed on the people of the country miseries which were yet unmeasured. They had ruined the property of the country, and brought equal ruin on the character of the laboring classes. They had led these classes into a condition where industry was robbed of its rights, and idleness, vice, and profligacy had usurped those rights; while property was reduced to a state (not even by a change so beneficial as an agrarian law,) bordering on destruction. In short, England, under the operation of those poor laws, exhibited at this

moment a country, where was peace without plenty, profound outward tranquillity, with constant inward disturbance, and rancor between the two great classes—the laborers and the rich." These truths are as obvious, as they are startling.

The American, on arriving in England, is often struck with the fact, that the poor around him, who have emerged to the light of day, have come up from far lower depths of misery and degradation, than any which exists in his native land. And yet in England, the poor rates amount to more than twice the expenses of government in the United States—even to thirty millions of dollars a year! Besides this, what

a vast amount is given by the hand of private charity to the deserving poor, as well as to professed beggars! Bad as the moral effect of luxury may be, it is doubtless far better for society, that the rich should spend their money in the luxuries that create employment, than that by a close economy they should give all their surplus to the poor.

It matters somewhat, but not a great deal, whether the begging poor can calculate on a sum of money furnished by poor laws, or by charitable societies. In the latter case, there is a stronger appeal to gratitude. But in either case, the sum is placed among their regular

expenditures; the good which it does them is very temporary, while the evil is very great and lasting. How effectually does it palsy the spirit of self-reliance, the principle of self-respect, and break the inward spring of moral energy and manly virtue! The more ample and sure these provisions are beyond a certain limit, the more numerous the poor become. The truth of this may be seen illustrated in some parts of Italy, where, according to the popular doctrine, almsgiving is made so much of as a meritorious means of purchasing Divine rewards. There, the splendors of the sky, the balmy air, the fertile fields, the miracles of art and genius, often

awaken in the traveller's bosom an exquisite pleasure, which ever and anon is marred and dissipated by the scenes of human wretchedness around him. At Rome, you might be lingering, on some evening, at sunset, around that most delightful spot, the Pincian Way, admiring the city spread out below and beyond you, and the radiance of the western horizon, falling in a rich flood upon the mighty dome of St. Peter's. You might be saying to yourself, "What a paradise is this!" But scarcely would you have time to become absorbed in the enchanting vision, ere beggary thrusts its deformities in your sight, lifts its piteous moan, and presses its harassing supplica-

tion. It is a poverty, too, which seems to be more deeply engraven in the countenance, than any which we see here, and to have touched the shrivelled skin, and every nerve and muscle, with a strange power of expressing wretchedness. If any of you have seen West's picture of Christ healing the sick, you have probably noticed with what skill the painter has aimed to show the fact, that in the old world, where poverty is transmitted from generation to generation, most wonderfully a man becomes a very personification of imbecility and misery. And yet at Rome there are richly-endowed institutions for the poor, twenty-two hospitals, and indeed a patrimo-

ny with as LARGE A REVENUE as is to be found in any city in Christendom.

If, then, experiments at home, if observation abroad, if the history of the world, prove any thing, it is, that indiscriminate almsgiving inflicts a heavy curse; that to permit those who can and ought to take care of themselves, to depend on alms at all, is to aggravate calamity. It is to unnerve the inner man, to foster habits adverse to the earthly, spiritual, and eternal good of the poor, and to bring a mighty mass of "dead weight" upon an active community. Instances have been known in this country and in others, of men, just able to sustain themselves by their labor, under an extraordinary

pressure, being invited to partake of some surplus provision for the poor. At first, they have declined, but have at last consented; and from that hour to the day of their death, their names were never off the poor list. Who, that thinks how widely spread and deeply rooted is pauperism in other lands, is not appalled at the thought of its growing with our growth and strengthening with our strength,—of its increasing its multitudes here, where each class of society is so intimately united to every other, bound together in one social compact, and one civil destiny? The question before us, then, is,—what is to be done? In that, each individual should take an interest. The

generic answer to the question is that which the text suggests, *to consider the poor.* To develope and apply this direction, in a few particulars, will occupy the remainder of this discourse. Let me ask you, then, to proceed with me, while I consider the condition of the poor, and the duties thence arising.

The poor, in all countries, may be divided into several classes. I. *There are the vicious poor.* The chief vices which degrade them, the causes of their poverty, are *idleness* and *intemperance.* The action of these is reciprocal. The one produces or fosters the other; and either may bring all evils in its train. Sloth throws open the flood gates of temptation. It has been well said, "an idle mind is *the*

devil's workshop," and the way in which he works has been described somewhere, by a poetic pen.

Of sloth comes weariness—of that comes drinking;
Of drinking comes disease, of disease comes spending;
Of spending comes want—of want comes theft;
Of theft comes what?—a sad catastrophe—
Disgrace without, a hell within, a death unmourned.

Three fourths of the pauperism in this land arises from intemperance, and the evil defies relief, until the cause be removed. Yet in looking at the history of intemperance, let it not be forgotten, that the sin of it among the poor is to some extent to be charged upon the rich. How could the poor be preserved from the vortex of intemperance, when the rich smoothed the way thither by

their example? Whilst the use of ardent spirits was fashionable and honorable—when the invitation to partake of it was deemed the appropriate expression of hospitality—when it was taken at all seasons and on all occasions—in winter to guard against cold, and in summer to guard against heat; to nerve the body amidst the lassitude of labor, and to exhilarate the heart when the spirits were depressed, how could the poor, who had tenfold more need of such a panacea than the rich, be expected to resist the influence of public opinion and practice? Oh no; when now you see the poor victim of intemperance, clad in rags, or shivering with cold, cut him not loose at

once from your sympathies, as being the sole and guilty author of his woes, but remember, that he may have been borne onward to his ruin upon the tide of influence which has come down from the high places of the land, and which, though smooth and gentle in its flow, terminates in a dark unfathomed gulf of helpless misery.

After all that you have read and heard and thought upon this subject, it is not needful that I should now speak to you of the evils of intemperance, of the nature and power of alcohol, its effects upon the body and mind of man, of the burning thirst which every drop creates for more, of the inflamed blood, the quickened

pulse, the fevered brain, the weakened muscle, the unnerved system, which it induces; the callous conscience, the hardened heart, the blunted reason, the distorted judgment, the withered sympathies, the cold chills of a depressed spirit, or the unearthly gleams of a frantic joy, which mark its presence; of the squandered wealth, the blasted reputation, the domestic woes, the sighs of the mother, the tears of the wife, the maddening terrors of the child to which it gives rise; of the rampant passions, and fiend-like purposes, and horrid crimes which it causes; of the constant and increasing taxation of health and wealth, and blood and souls, which this insatiate monster

levies upon the community in which he is permitted to stalk abroad.

But I will say, that it is in vain for us to deplore the evil of pauperism, and worse than in vain to give money to mitigate it, unless we do what we can to dry up the springs of intemperance. In order to do this, it becomes us to summon every element of lawful power at our command. And truly, while mingling our griefs with those of many thousand helpless mourners, whose abodes this vice has made desolate, and while contributing from our purses to their relief, it is a hard thing to be told that legislation can do nothing for us. Is it not hard, that while you are taxed for the support of the poor slaves of

intemperance at South Boston, I should be constrained to ask you to-night to come to our aid in saving from pinching cold and from starvation those more than widowed wives, those more than orphan children who are thus wantonly deprived of their natural protectors? Yet this is a part of my mission here, and the philosophy of a free government which prevails around us, tells you in effect, that no law can provide an antidote for such an evil, because, however largely it may swell its catalogue of woes, the *right* of individuals to inflict them can not be questioned, or at least not invaded. Nevertheless, take courage! The recent reform in Ireland, achieved without the aid

of legislation, is full of incitements to us to move on unweariedly in this great work. Marvellous as is the change wrought there, I doubt not that it will be lasting; for when the poor man comes to find on Saturday night, that he has more abundant comforts than he was wont in his cabin, a cheerful fire on his hearth, a happy family, and money to spare in his pocket, his eyes will be opened to the charms, and his heart enraptured by the blessings of temperance.

But then, secondly, there are the *helpless poor*, whose poverty is the effect of *natural causes*, which include whatever takes from them the ability to labor. The blind, the lame, the

maimed, the aged, orphan children, and such as are burdened with the support of others in a like condition, come within this class. Hard is their lot. To them life has but few attractions. They know nothing of its luxuries, but little of its comforts, and to them earth is, in every sense, "*a vale of tears*," except that, by means of the religion which their faith embraces, Heaven pours its own light around their dark abode, and shows them, that from the gloomy pathway in which they walk, they will emerge into those realms of light and peace, where none shall say, "I am sick," and where the tears shall be wiped from off all faces. With some such I am ac-

quainted, and am much their debtor. I have learned much from them. I have learned lessons of contentment, more deeply learned them, than I could have done by any eloquence of words. I have learned the simplicity, the beauty, the power, of a vital faith in Christ; its fitness to meet man's cravings amidst his darkest hours and deepest wants; and if there be any here who desire to advance in Christian virtue and practical wisdom, I commend such cases to your regard, that you may know the full meaning of the text, "Blessed is the man that considereth the poor."

Let no one deem this the mere language of romance. There are

those whose designation in the "record on high," is, *the poor of my people.* In the midst of their deep poverty, they are rich in the fruits of faith. How often have I thought of this, when accustomed to visit the chamber of one who had been confined to her bed for a long series of years. Emaciated, helpless, dependent to a great degree on the hand of charity, her features were usually lighted up with the expression of a heavenly peace of spirit. To the child of pleasure and of fashion, her abode might seem a gloomy place; to her, it was "the gate of heaven." "It is true," she would say, "my path seems dark and rough, but I am led by a kind Father's hand. I

know that all things shall work together for good to them that love Him. His way is in the deep; the dispensations of his Providence are mysterious; but then,

> "God is his own interpreter,
> And he will make it plain."

And truly, I ask, is it not plain to us all, that in such an instance of meek and suffering piety as this, God speaks to all who witness it, to teach us how little the world can do to make us really happy, and of what transcendent worth are "the riches of his grace." Thus, too, would he quicken our Christian sympathies into lively exercise, by leading us to a tender treatment of those whom, by his own severe discipline,

he is preparing for the skies. For, doubtless, he often sees it to be best to blight our fairest worldly prospects, to draw our hearts to heaven. He mars our "pleasant pictures," in order to save our souls. Just as it was when a celebrated artist stood on a lofty scaffold, endeavoring, by the touches of his magic pencil, to realize the ideas of beauty which were glowing in his mind. All absorbed in his tasteful employment, he was moving quickly backward to the edge of the precipice, to catch a new glimpse of the enchanting object, when in an instant a friendly hand seized a sponge, dashed it upon the picture, and by spoiling its beauty, saved his life. So God

deals with men. The bereaving stroke is often a proof of his love; and while he regards the sufferer with a friendly eye, has that sufferer no claim on our regard, sympathy and care? Most eminently shall it be found true, in such a case, "he that giveth unto the poor, lendeth unto the Lord."

There is a third class, who may be called the *temporarily* poor, whose want arises from transient and accidental causes,—as misfortune in business, unproductive seasons, excessive cold, or lack of employment. They are those whose productive industry is barely sufficient to meet their daily exigencies, and of course the moment their ability to work

ceases, the pressure of want commences. Their case demands special and prompt attention, and peculiar care should be taken in dispensing aid, to do it in such a way as not to diminish their self-respect, nor to palsy the spirit of independence which has lived in their bosoms as a spring of activity. It should prove itself to be the offspring of a fraternal and manly sympathy, seeking to relieve a misfortune to which all are liable; and this, instead of weakening, would quicken that generous ambition to do well, which leads one to look on "the bright side of things," and to make the most of small advantages.

In order to perform well the du-

ties which we owe to this class, it becomes us to cherish a profound respect for man as man, a rational being and a creature of God, capable of being raised from the lowest depths of degradation to the highest walks of virtue, honor, and happiness. This will give power to our benevolence. It will beam forth from our features, it will animate our manners, it will modify our tones of voice, and will enable us to utter those "winged words," which will find their way to the hearts of the poor. The spirit appropriate to this service was once beautifully expressed by Boudon, an eminent French surgeon, who was called to perform an important operation on Cardinal

du Bois, the Prime Minister of France. As he entered the room, the Cardinal said to him, "You must not expect to handle me so roughly as you do those miserable wretches at your hospitals." The surgeon replied with dignity, "My lord, each one of those whom you are pleased to call miserable wretches, is a Prime Minister in my eyes!"

A fourth class consists of the *regular working poor*, whose labor is not sufficient to supply their wants. Their employment is variable; they are dependent on uncertain jobs; they live "from hand to mouth." The family, perhaps, is quite large, having in it a number dependent on the rest—some either very old, or

very young, or quite infirm. Bound together by the ties of family relationship, they often exhibit in a touching manner the domestic virtues, — meekness, tenderness, patience; and, on the other hand, frequently show an utter destitution of all the qualities which make a happy home. These dwell on the borders of beggary. Hard pressed with care, they are beset with temptations to cross that boundary, and take up begging as a trade. Still, for them, that would be a sad descent, both as to happiness and character. This class is very large, and makes a demand for the largest share of Christian consideration. There is continual danger, lest be-

ing sick at heart, with anxiety, disappointment, and neglect, they give themselves up doggedly to their fate, and cease to put forth that energy, which they possess for their own support. What these chiefly need, is the influence of personal friendship—a friendship which shall make them feel that they are thought of, cared for, respected; and which will thence lead them to cherish self-respect. There is probably no one here who is not capable of being a friend, to act such a part for such a family. It would not cost much time or much money, and would often do more good than money. You may be forced to say, sometimes, "silver and gold have I

none;" but if in the spirit of a friend to the poor, you add, "such as I have, give I thee," you may accomplish what would seem almost miraculous to the eyes of others,—in a sense, causing the lame to rise up and walk, thanking you and praising God.

The class of the laboring poor of which I speak, are those who have hard work in buffeting the currents of adversity; and sometimes, as they look around, and feel themselves forgotten, they get discouraged, are tempted to give up exertion, and let themselves sink; but the touch of a friendly hand, and the cheering of a friendly voice, will put new life into them,—will keep them head and

breast above water, and perhaps incite them to struggle on, until they can place their feet on solid ground.

Another thing which this class of the poor justly claim of us, is *liberality in our dealings with them.* They ought not to be left to feel that the rich are their oppressors, who begrudge them the common blessings of Providence, and would wish them to wear a suppliant, cringing air, as if "begging pardon of all flesh for being in the world." This all acknowledge to be true; and yet I might tell you of cases, like the one which I am about to mention, to illustrate the principle. On a cold afternoon, a poor man saw a load of coal laid before the door of a weal-

thy merchant. By some mistake, no one had gone from the coal-wharf to throw it in. The passer-by requested the job. He was a father, having a sick wife, and several children dependent on him. He proposed to do the work for a reasonable sum,—not more than enough to buy a supper for his family. "That is too much, by half," said the merchant. The poor man began to plead his necessities. His manner proved his anxiety to obtain what he sought. This made the merchant sure of carrying his point, and he added, "You may take it, if you choose, for half what you ask; if not, leave it,"—and turning his back, shut the door. That was a

bitter moment to the laborer. In his bosom opposing feelings were struggling for the mastery. At first, he could not brook the thought of taking work on such terms. But then he remembered his cheerless home, his helpless wife, and hungry children; a tear coursed down his manly cheek, and seizing his shovel, achieved the job for nearly half of what he knew it to be worth.

Was that treatment right? No: it was grinding the face of the poor, and incurring that curse, which the Most High uttered, when he said, "He that giveth to the poor shall not lack, but he that hideth his eyes shall have many a curse;" "he that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his

Maker, but he that honoreth God, hath mercy on the poor."

Not far from this place, there lives a widow, who strives to support herself by daily labor. She is employed in making shirts, for each of which she receives seven cents. She is able to make seven of these articles in five days, and of course can earn but little over nine cents a day. Her whole time is employed, her whole strength is tasked, to gain such a paltry pittance. An artful beggar could get more, and without strong virtuous feelings, such persons must yield to the temptation to become beggars. Surely, it is dangerous to cherish a state of things in which any portion of the commu-

nity are forced to feel that they may starve by industry, and thrive by beggary.

In dealing with the active poor, we should show a respect for industry, and endeavor to foster and reward it, whether it be in the case of a man who gains his living by his muscular strength, or a female who toils with her needle. For a people to cherish a right tone of feeling on this point, is better than to spend large fortunes in donations; for by the former, we make the most of what power they have to help themselves, cherish their moral strength and active virtue; by the latter, we do much to destroy all self-reliance, all generous aspirations.

Rousseau, talking in the spirit of a chimerical philosophy, thought that an equal division of property in a community would make all honest and peaceable, as it would remove all temptation to envy, theft, or violence. As well might he have said, that an equal distribution of books would make all men literary, or that an equal distribution of cold water would make all men temperate. No: evils which take their rise from the darkness of the mind, or the disorder of the moral feelings, cannot be removed by such specifics, or any change in the outward condition. The great thing to be done, is, to inculcate right principles, to call forth right affections, and to

form right habits, which are "the el ements of character, and the mas ters of action."

Having respect to these points, i only remains that we adopt some plan, by which, in the dispensatior of our charities to the needy, we may guard ourselves against the danger of encouraging idleness or imposture. To this subject, the attention of those who are most deeply interested in the Howard Benevolent Society has been steadfastly directed. On this account, they have cheerfully coöperated with the "Society for the Prevention of Pauperism," which was formed in this city more than five years ago. That Society, acting on the principle tha

prevention is better than a remedy, have aimed at crushing the very germs of pauperism. To do this, its first measure has been, to procure employment for the suffering poor, who were able and willing to work. During the past year, seventeen hundred and six persons have been provided with suitable places, through its agency. What a large proportion of these have probably been saved to themselves and to society! Its next object is, to prevent the necessity of street begging. To accomplish this, it provides, by its arrangements, for dispensing aid to those only who will not abuse it. It sustains an agent, who is constantly devoted to its service, and who may

be found at his office every day, from nine to one o'clock, and who spends his afternoons in visiting those who need his personal attention; ascertaining thus their character and condition, and the extent to which aid is desirable. Lest any should feel constrained, from the claims of humanity, to give at hazard to strangers at their doors, the Society furnishes tickets, at six cents each, with which it invites the benevolent to provide themselves; and then, instead of giving money to an unknown applicant, to present him with one or more of these tickets, and direct him to the office, where his wants will be investigated, and proper relief afforded.

If this plan should be universally adopted, it will form an effective check to a portentous and growing evil.

At the office of this central agency of which I speak, delegates from this and other benevolent associations of the city meet monthly, and review their doings, in order that the visitors of the poor may have fully before them the condition of all who have been the subjects of charity. In this way, they are enabled very soon to detect any impostor. From such a position, they may command a full view of the whole rugged landscape of pauperism, and concert the best measures to make its "crooked paths straight,

its rough places plain," and to throw over it a softened aspect of productive industry, peace, and happiness.

Certainly no one, who considers for a moment how easily a large city may become the haunt of shameless mendicants, and that the very renown of its benevolence, the number of its charitable institutions, will attract hordes of such to its streets and recesses, can fail to see the necessity of some system, adapted to counteract so dreadful a tendency. To do this, a beginning has been made, and we call upon all of you, as men, citizens, and Christians, to coöperate in this work. Already the sons of New England, as they have viewed the multitudes

of wretched beings who throng the capitals of Europe, and beset the traveller at every step of his way, have felt their hearts throb with grateful emotion, on being able to say, "the moans of beggary are rarely heard in Boston." Let us arise, and grapple with this evil in good earnest; not merely that we may rejoice in so noble a distinction, but also that we may provoke others to a like labor of love,—to a service so pleasing to God, so auspicious to man.

Having thus expounded the principle on which this Society is acting, I feel that full scope is now given to me, that I may appeal to your hearts to-night, for the exercise of a

warm-hearted liberality to the really needy. I may now feel bold to present to your attention the cases which demand immediate relief. I freely confess, that I should have no heart to plead for a society which scatters its alms without just discrimination. And, faithful as the Howard Benevolent Society may be to the truths which I have proclaimed, yet we would not wish to interfere with the workings of individual charity. But, with respectful earnestness, would we urge on your acceptance this alternative: either take the pains to make thorough investigation touching the characters of those whom you assist, or else act in concert with a Society which

does so, and which is thence worthy to be the almoner of your bounty.

Now, is your benevolence checked by a doubt, whether that bounty would be well applied? To remove that doubt, instead of speaking to you, I would fain take you by the hand, if the occasion allowed, and invite you to accompany me in such a walk as I have lately taken. Soon, on entering a house, you would find yourself at the bottom of a long, narrow, winding staircase, up which I would ask you to follow me. On reaching the top, you would enter a room, where you would see no carpet on the floor, but one chair, a bed on which lies a

sick child, and where yesterday I found the mother leaning over some embers in the fire-place. "Why, Madam," I observed to her, "it is not a *very* cold day, and yet you seem to shivér." "True," she replies; "I have been out washing all day, and feel fatigued and chilled." She is dependent on the labor of her hands. Her husband went to sea three years ago, and has not been heard from since. She has just earned enough to procure some food; but her stock of wood is nearly exhausted. Shall she have some more? This is the question for us to answer, and need I doubt what response it will meet with here?

Descending from this abode of

want, let us proceed to another. Not far distant, on entering a low, ten-foot building, you will see an invalid in middle life, bolstered up in a bed which occupies a large portion of the room. Disease has attacked her heart, and her sufferings are severe. The law of Nature is reversed here; for, instead of the parent, in her declining years, receiving the support of the daughter, she is obliged to bestow on that daughter all the care she did in helpless infancy. Their means of living are exhausted. Some friendly neighbors have supplied them with food; but now the stock of fuel is nearly consumed. Shall we replenish it, or leave the sufferer, throughout her

tedious nights, to feel the pains of cold in addition to those of sickness? This is the question now before us.

Having looked in upon this scene of helpless infirmity, let us turn to one of a different character, not far from it, where you will see the signs of health and industry, and yet of an extreme privation, which powerfully appeals to every generous heart. A mother, busily at work, in making cloth garments, surrounded with several children, neatly clad, attracts your attention. She has been a widow several years; and it was the request of her dying husband, that she would do all that was possible, to keep the family together. To this good work she has

tasked herself, and has toiled both day and night to accomplish it. From her you may learn a lesson of virtuous self-denial; for her table being supplied by the labor of her hands, during two successive years, it has been furnished with no articles of food except those which were deemed *necessary*, all such luxuries as butter and sugar, having been banished. During that period, she has been a prisoner at home, not having in a single instance crossed the sidewalk. And why was this? For a reason that redounds to her honor. In order that her children might attend the common school, the Sunday school, and the sanctuary, she cut up all the

decent clothes she possessed, to supply garments for them! Thus, with all of woman's "deathless trust," and all the energy of a mother's love, has she met the storms of a dark and trying day. It is only occasionally that she has asked assistance,—for sometimes the expense of fuel would exceed her means; and who that has the heart of a man in his bosom, would not feel it writhe with a pang of regret, to be unable to pluck one thorn from the path of such a pilgrim?

For our purpose, I have gone far enough. I need lead you to no other scenes of wo. But suppose that it were in my power to summon before you the whole multitude of

the deserving poor around us; to call forth from their over-crowded or lone recesses, the aged and infirm, the sick, the lame, the maimed, the widow and the fatherless,—truly, then, you would feel with what power unobtrusive misery can plead, and each one of you would say, "mine eye affecteth my heart." Then, if I should ask, "Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" would you not feel that I spoke in the name of Humanity, and that my voice was only the echo of the voice of Providence? Once, when the Saviour was on earth, he looked with pity on a fainting crowd, and addressed that question to one of his disciples. "This he said to

prove him, for he himself knew what he would do."* And if that inquiry, as it fell from the lips of Christ, formed a part of one man's probation, does it now, as it comes to us from the voice of Providence, form a part of our own? Yes: the Most High hath blessings in reserve for many of the suffering poor; yet, by means of their poverty, He would try us, and give us the opportunity, by kindness to them, to prove our love to Him.

Let it be the aim of all of us who profess to be Christians, to pass this part of our probation well; to feel, in the retrospect of life, that we have so discharged our duties to the

* John vi. 6.

unfortunate around us, as to have become benefactors to them, and to our common country; to be able to say, without invoking a curse on ourselves, in the language of the stricken Patriarch, "If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail, or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless have not partaken thereof; if I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; if his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep; if I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate: then let mine arm fall from my shoulder-

blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone." Oh! may it be ours to share in the dignity of thousands of the poor, when they shall have exchanged their feeble, sickly frames for bodies refined, spiritual, and glorious; their tattered garments for white robes; their miserable hovels for mansions in the skies; their degradation for immortal honor; their tears for smiles; their groans for hymns of praise. Then, may it be ours, to circle with them the same throne, to unite with them in worship, to sympathize in their gratitude, and to bear a part in their immortal songs.

APPENDIX.

HOWARD BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.*

THE name and efforts of HOWARD have given an impulse to benevolent feeling, and led to the organization of innumerable general and local societies, for the alleviation of suffering humanity. This a pleasing thought, and evinces the incalculable benefits which result from the exertions of *one man*, when he is actuated by the principles of deep-toned piety and untiring Philanthropy.

Among the numerous charitable institutions in Boston, the "Howard Benevolent Society" justly holds a distinguished rank. Probably no other institution in the city, with the same means, ever administered more mercy to sickness and poverty, or more consolation to the troubled mind, than this Society. Its success is principally owing to a wise feature of its constitution, which requires a personal knowledge of distress, before relief be granted,—and to the judicious character of its members, among

* The following is an extract from the Appendix to the "Memoirs of Howard," published in this country,—a work that should be owned and read by every true Christian philanthropist.

whom have been found our most active and respectable citizens.

This Society is only one among many kindred institutions in both hemispheres, which may be considered as the fruits of the example of the great HOWARD. Such Societies prove the advance of Christian sympathy in the human breast, and bespeak the approach of millenial happiness.

This Society was formed by "a few individuals, on Monday, the first day of June, 1812, convened at the house of Mr. Matthew Parke, with the intention of forming a society for the assistance of the destitute sick."—At this evening meeting, Mr. M. S. Pulsifer acted as President, and Mr. G. L. Freeman, as Secretary. An animated preamble and judicious constitution were then adopted. Its officers are a President, Secretary, Treasurer, and a Standing Committee of sixteen persons, as almoners to distribute its charities.

February 16, 1818, this Society was incorporated, and, under its revised constitution, it has moved on in the discharge of its high duties. May its character ever be worthy of the pre-eminent name it bears; and a liberal community never be weary in enabling it to pursue its course "in doing good."

GOVERNMENT

OF THE

HOWARD BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.

MOSES GRANT, PRESIDENT.
ARTEMAS SIMONDS, SECRETARY.
CALVIN WHITING, TREASURER.

STANDING COMMITTEE.

Ward 1. H. CHADBOURN, Chadbourn & Co., wood wharf, Commercial street.

Ward 2. JOS. MORIARTY, Salem street, No. 32. EPHRAIM MILTON, Clark street.

Ward 3. LEWIS JONES, Union street, No. 36. T. W. HASKINS, Union street, No. 4.

Ward 4. S. G. SHIPLEY, North Federal court.

Ward 5. M. GRANT, Cambridge street, No. 7, and Union street, No. 9.

Ward 6. Rev. W. HOWE, Chambers street, No 11.

Ward 7. T. TARBELL, Water street, No. 55.

Ward 8. J. W. WARREN, Jr., Federal street, No. 46. J. W. GATES, Commercial street, No. 26.

Ward 9. DANIEL T. COIT, High street, No. 12.

Ward 10. JOSEPH EUSTIS, Front street, No. 113.

Ward 11. CALVIN WHITING, Warren st., No. 35. ARTEMAS SIMONDS, Overseers' Office, Faneuil Hall.

Ward 12. ALVAN SIMONDS, South Boston, corner Broadway and Turnpike street.

LIST OF PAST OFFICERS AND ANNIVERSARY PREACHERS.

Year.	*Presidents.*	*Secretaries.*	*Treasurers.*	*Preachers.*
1812.	O. Lowell,	G. L. Freeman,	Marston Allen.	
1813.	J. Woodcock,	L. Grosvenor,	Samuel Adams.	
1814.	John Elliot,	James Clap,	W. C. Parke, Jr.	D. Sharp.
1815.	James Clap,	W. C. Gilman,	W. C. Parke, Jr.	
1815.	James Clap,	W. C. Gilman,	Andrew Bradshaw,	J. Codman.
1816.	James Clap,	J. W. Rogers,	Andrew Bradshaw,	T. Baldwin.
1817.	Thomas Vose,	William Bates,	Samuel C. Lee,	S. E. Dwight.
1818.	Thomas Vose,	Wm. P. Rice,	Samuel C. Lee.	
1818.	Thomas Vose,	Wm. P. Rice,	Moses Grant,	E. Cornelius.
1819.	Thomas Vose,	Wm. P. Rice,	" "	
1820.	Thomas Vose,	Ezra Haskell,	" "	R. S. Storrs.
1821.	Thomas Vose,	Ezra Haskell,	" "	Edw. Everett.
1822.	J. C. Proctor,	Ezra Haskell,	" "	Samuel Guile.
1823.	John Tappan,	J. F. Bumstead,	" "	Dr. Jarvis.
1824.	John Tappan,	G. Hallock,	" "	J. G. Palfrey.
1825.	John Tappan,	Geo. Rogers,	" "	H. Ware, Jr.
[illegible]	John Tappan,	Geo. Rogers,	" "	F. Wayland, Jr.
[illegible]	[illegible]ppan.	Geo. Rogers,	" "	B. B. Wisner.

1828.	John Tappan,	Geo. Rogers,	Moses Grant,	E. S. Gannett.
1829.	J. C. Warren,	E. G. Parker,	" "	A. Potter.
1830.	J. C. Warren,	J. H. Lane,	" "	J. D. Knowles.
1831.	J. C. Warren,	J. H. Lane,	" "	R. W. Emerson
1832.	Chas. Tappan,	T. R. Marvin,	" "	G. W. Blagden
1833.	" "	" "	" "	John Hopkins.
1834.	" "	" "	" "	Baron Stow.
1835.	Moses Grant,	S. G. Shipley,	Calvin Whiting.	
1836.	" "	" "	" "	John S. Stone.
1837.	" "	Artemas Simonds,	" "	T. M. Clark.
1838.*	" "	" "	" "	
1839.	" "	" "	" "	
1840.†	" "	" "	" "	
1841.	" "	" "	" "	Wm. Hague.

* Addresses at the Odeon, by Rev. Messrs. Blagden, Pierpont, and Howe.

† Poem, by Isaac F. Shepherd.

BOSTON SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF PAUPERISM.

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PREAMBLE.

WHEREAS we believe that true benevolence consists not wholly in efforts to relieve the distresses of the poor, by the distribution of alms among them, but also in exertions to prevent, as far as is practicable, the existence of those distresses; and whereas we believe this object of prevention may be greatly promoted by a more intimate personal acquaintance with the necessitous of all classes, by affording them advice and encouragement to habits of industry, economy, temperance, and virtue, and to a prudent use of such means of livelihood as they possess, and above all, by carefully nurturing in them those feelings of self-respect and self-dependence, which are too often lost by the reception of charitable aid. We, the subscribers, for the purpose of uniting our efforts to advance, by these means, and by the collection and diffusion of information, the great work of preventing the evils of Pauperism in the City